

What is Claimed is:

1. A method for using an interactive media application to substitute pause-time content in place of media that is paused, comprising:

providing a user with the ability to pause the media;
pausing the media;
playing the pause-time content while the media is paused; and
recording the media while the media is paused.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the media is real-time media.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the real-time media is near video-on-demand media.

4. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing the user with the ability to resume play of the paused media.

5. The method of claim 1 further comprising resuming play of the media at substantially the same point at which the media was paused.

6. The method of claim 5 further comprising resuming play of the media at the same point at which the media was paused.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

providing the user with the ability to resume play of the paused media; and

providing the user with the ability to fast-forward the media.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising recording the media as the media is playing.

9. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

recording the media as the media is playing; and

providing the user with the ability to rewind the media.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein the pause-time content is associated with the media that is paused.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the media is a television program and the pause-time content is associated with the television program.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein the media is a music program and the pause-time content is associated with the music program.

13. The method of claim 1 wherein the media has associated media data and wherein the interactive media application uses the content of the media data to substitute pause-time content that is associated with the media.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein the pause-time content is selected from the group consisting of an advertisement, a promotion, a trivia game, a musical selection, a graphic, an animation, a program summary, a textual description, and a Web site.

15. The method of claim 1 wherein the pause-time content is broadcast video.

16. The method of claim 1 wherein the interactive media application is implemented on user equipment, the method further comprising storing the pause-time content locally at the user equipment.

17. The method of claim 1 wherein the interactive media application is implemented on user equipment and wherein the pause-time content is stored remote from the user equipment, the method further comprising allowing the interactive media application to access the pause-time content on-demand.

18. The method of claim 1 wherein the interactive media application is implemented on a personal video recorder.

19. The method of claim 1 wherein the interactive media application is implemented on a personal video recorder, the method further comprising recording the media with the personal video recorder.

20. The method of claim 1 wherein the media is real-time media, the method further comprising

displaying the amount of time that has lapsed between the paused media and the real-time media.

21. The method of claim 1 wherein the interactive media application is implemented on user television equipment and wherein the media is television programming that is being delivered to the user television equipment in real-time, the method further comprising displaying the amount of time that has lapsed between the paused television programming and the real-time television programming in an overlay.

22. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing the user with the ability to personalize the pause-time content.

23. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing the user the ability to select particular types of pause-time content to be presented by the interactive media application.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein the type of pause-time content is selected from a group consisting of an advertisement, a promotion, a trivia game, a musical selection, a graphic, an animation, a program summary, a textual description, and a Web site.

25. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing the user the ability to prevent particular types of pause-time content to be presented by the interactive media application.

26. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing the user the ability to change the pause-time content that is playing.

27. An interactive media system that substitutes pause-time content in place of media that is paused, comprising user equipment configured to:

provide a user with the ability to the pause media;

pause the media;

play the pause-time content while the media is paused; and

record the media while the media is paused.

28. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is further configured to receive the media.

29. The system of claim 28 wherein the media is real-time media.

30. The system of claim 29 wherein the real-time media is near video-on-demand media.

31. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is further configured to provide the user with the ability to resume play of the paused media.

32. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is further configured to resume play of the media at substantially the same point at which the media was paused.

33. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is further configured to resume play of the media at the same point at which the media was paused.

34. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is further configured to:

provide the user with the ability to resume play of the paused media; and

provide the user with the ability to fast-forward the media.

35. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is further configured to record the media as the media is playing.

36. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is further configured to:

record the media as the media is playing; and

provide the user with the ability to rewind the media.

37. The system of claim 27 wherein the pause-time content is associated with the media that is paused.

38. The system of claim 27 wherein the media is a television program and the pause-time content is associated with the television program.

39. The system of claim 27 wherein the media is a music program and the pause-time content is associated with the music program.

40. The system of claim 27 further comprising media data that is associated with the media, wherein the user equipment is further configured to use the content of the media data to substitute pause-time content that is associated with the media.

41. The system of claim 40 wherein the user equipment is configured to receive the media data along with the media.

42. The system of claim 40 wherein the pause-time content is selected from the group consisting of an advertisement, a promotion, a trivia game, a musical selection, a graphic, an animation, a program summary, a textual description, and a Web site.

43 The system of claim 27 wherein the pause-time content is broadcast video.

44. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is configured to store the pause-time content.

45. The system of claim 27 further comprising a remote facility to store the pause-time content, wherein the user equipment is further configured to play the pause-time content by accessing the pause-time content on-demand from the remote facility.

46. The system of claim 27 wherein the remote facility is a media distribution facility.

47. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is user music equipment.

48. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is user television equipment.

49. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is a personal video recorder.

50. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is further configured to:

receive the media in real-time;
play the media in real-time; and
display the amount of time that has
lapsed between the paused media and the media that is
being received in real-time.

51. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is user television equipment and wherein the user television equipment is further configured to display the amount of time that has lapsed between the paused media and the media that is being received in real-time in an overlay.

52. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is further configured to provide the user with the ability to personalize the pause-time content.

53. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is further configured to provide the user the ability to select particular types of pause-time content to be presented by the user equipment.

54. The system of claim 53 wherein the type of pause-time content is selected from a group consisting of an advertisement, a promotion, a trivia game, a musical selection, a graphic, an animation, a program summary, a textual description, and a Web site.

55. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is further configured to provide the user the ability to prevent particular types of pause-time content to be presented by the user equipment.

56. The system of claim 27 wherein the user equipment is further configured to provide the user the ability to change the pause-time content that is playing.

57. A method for using an interactive media application to substitute pause-time content in place of media that is paused, comprising:

- providing a user with the ability to pause the media;
- pausing the media; and
- playing the pause-time content that is associated with the media while the media is paused.

58. The method of claim 57 wherein the media is previously recorded media.

59. The method of claim 57 wherein the interactive media application is implemented on user equipment and wherein the media is video-on-demand media that is stored remote from the user equipment.

60. The method of claim 57 wherein the interactive media application is implemented on user equipment, the method further comprising storing the pause-time content locally at the user equipment.

61. The method of claim 57 wherein the interactive media application is implemented on user equipment and wherein the pause-time content is stored remote from the user equipment, the method further comprising allowing the interactive media application to access the pause-time content on-demand.

62. The method of claim 61 further comprising providing the user with the ability to resume play of the paused media.

63. The method of claim 57 further comprising resuming play of the media at substantially the same point at which the media was paused.

64. The method of claim 63 further comprising resuming play of the media at the same point at which the media was paused.

65. The method of claim 57 further comprising providing the user with the ability to rewind and fast-forward the media.

66. The method of claim 57 wherein the media has associated media data and wherein the interactive media application uses the content of the media data to substitute pause-time content that is associated with the media.

67. The method of claim 57 wherein the pause-time content is selected from the group consisting of an advertisement, a promotion, a trivia game, a musical selection, a graphic, an animation, a program summary, a textual description, and a Web site.

68. The method of claim 57 wherein the pause-time content is broadcast video.

69. The method of claim 57 wherein the media is a television program and wherein the pause-time content is associated with the television program.

70. The method of claim 57 wherein the media is a music program and wherein the pause-time content is associated with the music program.

71. The method of claim 57 wherein the interactive media application is implemented on a personal video recorder.

72. The method of claim 57 wherein the interactive media application is implemented on user television equipment, the method further comprising displaying an interactive overlay over the media that informs the user of options that are available.

73. The method of claim 72 wherein the options that are available to the user are selected from the group consisting of rewind, pause, play, and fast-forward.

74. The method of claim 57 wherein the media is near video-on-demand media, the method further comprising resuming play of the near video-on-demand media by playing a subsequent feed of the near video-on-demand media.

75. The method of claim 74 further comprising displaying information while the near video-on-demand media is paused that displays the time remaining until the next feed of the near video-on-demand media will line up with the point at which the near video-on-demand media was paused.

76. The method of claim 57 further comprising providing the user with the ability to personalize the pause-time content.

77. The method of claim 57 further comprising providing the user the ability to select particular types of pause-time content to be presented by the interactive media application.

78. The method of claim 77 wherein the type of pause-time content is selected from a group consisting of an advertisement, a promotion, a trivia game, a musical selection, a graphic, an animation, a program summary, a textual description, and a Web site.

79. The method of claim 57 further comprising providing the user the ability to prevent particular types of pause-time content to be presented by the interactive media application.

80. The method of claim 57 further comprising providing the user the ability to change the pause-time content that is playing.

81. An interactive media system that substitutes pause-time content in place of media that is paused, comprising user equipment configured to:

- provide a user with the ability to pause the media;
- pause the media; and
- play pause-time content that is associated with the media while the media is paused.

82. The system of claim 81 wherein the media is previously recorded media.

83. The system of claim 82 wherein the user equipment is further configured to store the previously recorded media.

84. The system of claim 81 further comprising a remote facility at which the media is stored, wherein the user equipment is further configured to play the media by accessing the media on-demand from the remote facility.

85. The system of claim 81 wherein the remote facility is a media distribution facility.

86. The system of claim 81 wherein the user equipment is further configured to store the pause-time content.

87. The system of claim 81 further comprising a remote facility at which the pause-time media is stored and wherein the user equipment is further configured to play the media by accessing the pause-time content on-demand from the remote facility

88. The system of claim 87 wherein the remote facility is a media distribution facility.

89. The system of claim 81 wherein the user equipment is further configured to provide the user with the ability to resume play of the paused media.

90. The system of claim 81 wherein the user equipment is further configured to resume play of the media at substantially the same point at which the media was paused.

91. The system of claim 90 wherein the user equipment is further configured to resume play of the media at the same point at which the media was paused.

92. The system of claim 81 wherein the user equipment is further configured to provide the user with the ability to rewind and fast-forward the media.

93. The system of claim 81 further comprising media data that is associated with the media, wherein the user equipment is further configured to use the content of the media data to substitute the pause-time content that is associated with the media.

94. The system of claim 81 wherein the pause-time content is selected from the group consisting of an advertisement, a promotion, a trivia game, a musical selection, a graphic, an animation, a program summary, a textual description, and a Web site.

95. The system of claim 81 wherein the pause-time content is broadcast video.

96. The system of claim 81 wherein the media is a television program and wherein the pause-time content is associated with the television program.

97. The system of claim 81 wherein the media is a music program and wherein the pause-time content is associated with the music program.

98. The system of claim 81 wherein the user equipment is user music equipment.

99. The system of claim 81 wherein the user equipment is user television equipment.

100. The system of claim 81 wherein the user equipment is a personal video recorder.

101. The system of claim 81 wherein the user equipment is user television equipment and wherein the user television equipment is further configured to display an interactive overlay over the media that informs the user of options that are available.

102. The system of claim 101 wherein the options that are available to the user are selected from the group consisting of rewind, pause, play, and fast-forward.

103. The system of claim 81 wherein the media is near video-on-demand media and wherein the user equipment is further configured to resume play of the near video-on-demand media by playing a subsequent feed of the near video-on-demand media.

104. The system of claim 103 wherein the user equipment is further configured to display information while the near video-on-demand media is paused that displays the time remaining until the next feed of the near video-on-demand media will line up with the point at which the near video-on-demand media was paused.

105. The system of claim 81 wherein the user equipment is further configured to provide the user with the ability to personalize the pause-time content.

106. The system of claim 81 wherein the user equipment is further configured to provide the user the ability to select particular types of pause-time content to be presented by the user equipment.

107. The system of claim 106 wherein the type of pause-time content is selected from a group consisting of an advertisement, a promotion, a trivia game, a musical selection, a graphic, an animation, a program summary, a textual description, and a Web site.

108. The system of claim 81 wherein the user equipment is further configured to provide the user the ability to prevent particular types of pause-time content to be presented by the interactive media application.

109. The system of claim 81 wherein the user equipment is further configured to provide the user the ability to change the pause-time content that is playing.

110. A method for preventing a user from accessing a feature of an interactive media application, comprising:

playing media that has associated media data;

monitoring the media data associated with the media;

determining whether the content of the media data indicates that the user should be prevented from accessing the feature of the interactive media application; and

preventing the user from accessing the feature of the interactive media application when the media data indicates that the user should be prevented from accessing the feature.

111. The method of claim 110 wherein the media data indicates that the user should be prevented from fast-forwarding through the media that is playing.

112. The method of claim 110 wherein the media is an advertisement and wherein the media data

indicates that the user should be prevented from fast-forwarding through the advertisement.

113. The method of claim 110 further comprising displaying an indicator when the user attempts to access the feature.

114. The method of claim 110 wherein the indicator is a graphic that indicates that the feature that the user attempted to access is restricted.

115. An interactive media system that prevents a user from accessing a feature of an interactive media application, comprising user equipment configured to:

play media that has associated media data;

monitor the media data associated with the media;

determine whether the content of the media data indicates that the user should be prevented from accessing the feature of the interactive media application; and

prevent the user from accessing the feature of the interactive media application when the media data indicates that the user should be prevented from accessing the feature.

116. The system of claim 115 wherein the media data indicates that the user should be prevented from fast-forwarding through the media that is playing.

117. The system of claim 115 wherein the media is an advertisement and wherein the media data indicates that the user should be prevented from fast-forwarding through the advertisement.

118. The system of claim 115 wherein the user equipment is further configured to display an indicator when the user attempts to access the feature.

119. The system of claim 115 wherein the user equipment is further configured to display a graphic indicator when the user attempts to access is restricted.

120. A method for instructing an interactive media application implemented on user equipment, comprising:

playing media that has associated media data;

looking at the associated media data for instructions included in the media data;

storing a portion of the playing media based on the instructions.

121. The method of claim 120 wherein the media data indicates that at least two portions of the media should be stored, the method further comprising compiling the portions of the media for presentation as pause-time content.

122. An interactive media system that stores media, comprising user equipment configured to:

play media that has associated media data;

look at the associated media data for instructions included in the media data; and store a portion of the media based on the instructions.

123. The system of claim 122 wherein the media data indicates that at least two portions of the media should be stored, the system further configured to compile the portions of the media for presentation as pause-time content.